

October 28, 2000

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
RETIREMENT RELIEF ACT

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing on behalf of the more than 41,000 federal law enforcement officers a bill to more fairly calculate the formula used for disability retirement. Federal law enforcement retirement is based on a terribly complex formula which is less than equitable to the brave officers who become disabled when they put their lives on the line. My bill amends the federal disability retirement laws to properly reflect their retirement contributions and their public service.

Our federal law enforcement officers, federal fire fighters, capitol police and their families are now often treated inequitably after suffering what amounts to a career ending disability. My bill will correct this situation.

In too many cases, an officer injured in the line of duty may not have met the minimum years of government service required for disability benefits and survivor annuity. Their annuity and survivor benefits would then be computed at a lower rate than normal for law enforcement officers. It would be computed at the lower general civil service rate, despite the fact that the law enforcement officer paid a higher rate into his retirement. My bill provides retirement benefits and survivor annuities on an equitable and fair basis.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring this legislation so that we can help provide fair and equitable treatment to the men and women who so courageously serve our country.

IN HONOR OF THE MAKE A WISH
FOUNDATION

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Northeast, Central and Southern Ohio, an organization which succeeds in bringing hope to children who face the adversity of fatal illnesses.

The Foundation is a charity which grants the very special wishes of children, between the ages of 2½ and 18, who have been diagnosed with life-threatening illnesses. Any child that has been diagnosed appropriately by their doctor qualifies for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Following this, a team of Make-A-Wish volunteers visits the child and family to determine his or her wish. The organizations then works in conjunction with local contacts and businesses to transform the child's wish from fantasy into reality.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation offers children an opportunity to see their dreams come true. It recognizes the vital importance of hope to all human life. It seeks to extend a helping hand to all children in need. The Foundation

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granted the individual wishes of nearly 200 children in the fiscal year 1998. Each wish is limited only by the child's imagination. The organization helps all children irrespective of their families' financial need or status. It covers all expenses associated with a wish, including airfare and accommodation. It provides a ray of light for children in dark times.

I would also like to commend the tireless dedication of Rose Serraglio to the work of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. In her capacity as chairwoman and organizer of the Foundation's Halloween Benefit, she has demonstrated the highest order of caring for children whose world has been shattered by the traumatic effect of fatal illnesses.

My fellow colleagues, please rise with me in honoring the valuable contribution of the Make-A-Wish Foundation to the lives of children afflicted by the serious illnesses. It is an example to us all of the importance of helping the less fortunate members of our community.

INDEPENDENT FILMS AND
TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, On behalf of Representatives MARK FOLEY, ROBERT MATSUI, and XAVIER BECERRA, I would like to express our continued interest in an issue designed to increase the production of independent films and television programming in the United States.

As the Members know, the 1990's have seen an accelerating departure of U.S. financed films and television programs to Canada, Mexico and other foreign countries. The trend has become so pronounced that a new phrase has been coined to describe the impact—"runaway productions." Next year, we intend address this issue, look for reasonable and responsible legislative remedies and work with our trading partners to reverse the trend of filmings outside the U.S. solely for economic reasons. These efforts are supported by a diverse group of entertainment trade associations and guilds and would be targeted at productions costing between \$500,000 and \$10 million.

The impact of runaway productions has been profound. Runaway production means fewer employment opportunities for individuals directly employed in the U.S. film and television industry. Runaway productions also significantly reduce the business opportunities for the film and television service industries like hotels, restaurants and catering businesses, post production services providing editing and music scoring, equipment rental and transport companies, electrical contractors and many others who service or supply the entertainment industry.

Moreover, these job losses are not limited to Hollywood or Southern California. Many states have seen once thriving film and television industries depart, leaving behind unemployed technicians and craftspersons, business losses and reduced local tax receipts. States like Illinois, Texas and Florida have been par-

ticularly hard hit, but even the state of Minnesota, for example, has just experienced its worst year in the past eleven for film and television production. In addition, the individuals whose jobs are lost usually are highly skilled workers who cannot replace their income with work in another sector.

Where are the jobs going? A surprising number are going to Canada. According to Statistics Canada, for example, independent film and television and video production was up 16 percent in 1997-98, the most recent year for which Canadian statistics are available. In British Columbia, alone, film and television production has increased five-fold since the late 1980s to over \$700 million annually. Moreover, full-time Canadian employment in the film and television industry increased by 63 percent from the 1992-93 to 1997-98. The rising trend in Canadian film and television production exacerbates the runaway production problem because Canadian film and television crews and actors obtain the training necessary to accommodate even more productions.

More U.S. film and television production in Canada and elsewhere in the world means less production in the U.S. The U.S. production share of Movies of the Week broadcast on U.S. television declined from 62 to 41 percent between 1994-95 and 1999-2000 representing a loss of \$727 million in U.S. production expenditures. Estimates of overall job loss in the U.S. film and television industry run as high as 23,500 in 1998 alone. To select just one of many examples that demonstrate the impact of this disturbing trend on employment, aggregate wages for musicians performing on film scores in 1999 declined by more than 30 percent from the previous year.

Runaway production is due, in large part, to the concerted efforts of governments to attract U.S. film production. Canada has been particularly successful in this regard. For example, the combination of federal and provincial tax credits in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario exceed 30 percent of wages paid in connection with a production. The sheer size of these credits has increasingly attracted productions to Canada that might otherwise have stayed in the U.S.

We look forward to working with our colleagues next year in an effort to keep independent U.S. film and television production here at home in the United States.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
SIDNEY R. YATES

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I will never forget Sid Yates—ever. He loved the story of the Adams family. I could recite passages from the Adams Chronicles. He represented the finest this country has to offer.

Politics is not just serving. It's serving well and with high integrity. That was Sid Yates.

P.S.—He was lots of fun to be with!